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1991 ANNUAL REPORT OF ALBERTA IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

EDMONTON

This Annual Report covers the Advisory Committee's activities and experiences for the period January 1, 1991 to December 31, 1991. During this time, the Advisory Committee had the privilege to have served the Honourable Norm A. Weiss, MLA for Fort McMurray and Minister of Career Development and Employment.

As a result of its research and deliberations the Advisory Committee prepared and submitted three reports to the Minister. These are: "Report Pertaining to Immigration and Settlement Matters vis-a-vis Canada and the Province of Alberta", "Report on Immigration and Cross Cultural Understanding", and the 1989/90 Annual Report.

On July 7, 1992, the Honourable Norm A. Weiss hosted a round table discussion and reception at the Premier's office in Calgary for well over a hundred professional and business people of Calgary, and Members of the Minister's Advisory Committee. This event was successful in providing a forum conducive to frank discussion and open dialogue on issues and concerns of the immigrant business community. Knowledge and information was shared for the benefit of all. During the reception, a Calgarian restaurateur expressed to Advisory Committee Members Dora Lam and Fred Law that he needed further assistance regarding his particular circumstances. As a follow up, they visited this businessman the following day. During a meeting of over an hour, they listened, and offered recommendations regarding this businessman's specific concerns. At the end of this meeting, the restaurateur had all his questions answered, and was satisfied with the prompt follow up work by Members of the Minister's Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee also formulated the "Haider Dhanani Award Program" to celebrate the many contributions its first Chairman, the late Haider Dhanani, made to the community. Mr. Dhanani's commitment and selfless efforts have contributed tremendously to many immigrants. This award program was approved by the Honourable Norm A. Weiss for implementation commencing in 1992. It will recognize the important contributions of many Albertans in the settlement of newcomers to the Province.

Nineteen ninety-one will be remembered as a year of bountiful harvest. Apart from the reports, the Honourable Minister's round table discussion and reception with Calgarian immigrant professionals and business people, and the award program mentioned above, the Committee examined the merits of various immigration and settlement concerns. These centered around the theme of "Vision for the 1990's", and included the following activities and recommendations:

1. Assembling information on the accomplishment and contribution of immigrants to Alberta.

2. Creating an awareness of the benefits of immigrants to Alberta.

3. Preparing a convention to promote and highlight the contribution of immigrants to the economic, sport, academic and cultural aspects of Alberta.

4. Establishing an immigration foundation by the people, for the people, and with funding support from the Alberta Government.

5. Developing an economic and cultural understanding of Albertans from around the world.

6. Respecting each other's culture and history.

7. Inviting "main stream" Canadians to participate in multicultural events.

8. Encouraging self-help community groups to assist youth in need.

In November of 1991, the Honourable Norm A. Weiss, Minister of Career Development and Employment appointed new members to his Advisory Committee. He reappointed five members from the former Committee, and added seven new members.

Mr. Fred W. Law of Sherwood Park was reappointed as Chairman of the Advisory Committee. Others reappointed were Mrs. Daisy Chang of Sherwood Park, Mrs. Fatima Dhanani of Calgary, Mrs. Dora Lam of Calgary, and Dr. K.W. Chang of Calgary.

Seven new members appointed to the Advisory Committee were Mrs. Maria Siegl of Lethbridge, Mrs. Margaret Tanaka of High Level, Dr. Lal Harry Jaglalsingh of Edmonton, Mr. George Kumi of Calgary, Mr. Herminio Mallare of Red Deer, Mr. Drew Staffenberg of Calgary, and Mr. Harry Vissers of Enchant.

At this first meeting, members were briefed on the Committee's accomplishments to date and given a presentation on the responsibilities and activities of the Immigration and Settlement Division of the Department of Career Development and Employment. They were also informed of administrative and other related matters.

At the same meeting, the Advisory Committee agreed that it would be appropriate to undertake a retreat in January of 1992. The retreat shall be assisted by a consultant, and Departmental staff knowledgeable in immigration and settlement matters. The primary goal of the retreat is to provide an opportunity for an in-depth and thorough look formulating goals and objectives for the Advisory Committee to pursue in the 1990's.

In December, 1991, the Minister appointed Mrs. Sandi Kennedy of Okotoks to fill the remaining vacancy on the Advisory Committee.

The operative words for the future are "Immigration, settlement, and beyond!" The future is boundless. Our vision for immigration and settlement in the 1990's must indeed be visionary, futuristic, and real.

In summary, the Advisory Committee is confident that its vision for the 1990's will bring about new impetus for a better Alberta.

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